

Mr. Chairman, let us remember that 1 in 3 American adults is overweight or obese and more than 9 million children are struggling with obesity. H.R. 3161 aims to improve the eating habits of Americans, particularly our children through programs that teach children about healthy eating. H.R. 3161 increases funding for nutrition programs, including the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program, which broadens Fresh Fruit and Vegetable and Simplified Summer Food programs to all states to provide nutritious foods to children in low-income families, and specialty crop grants to encourage more fruit and vegetable consumption.

Obesity is associated with 35 major diseases including chronic and life-threatening conditions such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. It is important to keep our Nation healthy by providing access to high consumption of vegetables and fruits to the future of our great country, our children. By supporting H.R. 3161 we assure a healthy consumption of nutritional foods for children whose only crime is that their families are poor.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 3161 is essential because it addresses one of the most staggering causes of death in children: malnutrition. Malnutrition remains a significant problem worldwide, particularly among children. According to the United Nations World Food Programme, severe acute malnutrition affects an estimated 20 million children under the age of five worldwide and is responsible in whole or in part for more than half of all deaths of children. Malnutrition kills approximately one million children each year, or an average of one every thirty seconds.

These statistics are absolutely frightening and simply intolerable. They are also avoidable. The World Food Programme estimates that, when implemented on a large scale and combined with hospital treatment for children who suffer complications, a community-based approach to combating malnutrition could save the lives of hundreds of thousands of children each year.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 3161 recognizes the importance of helping our neighbors in combating the hunger. H.R. 3161 provides funding for the Foreign Agricultural Service in the amount of \$159,136,000 and transfers of \$4,985,000, for a total salaries and expenses level of \$164,121,000, an increase of \$2,817,000 above the amount available for fiscal year 2007 and a decrease of \$9,073,000 below the budget request.

In addition, H.R. 3161 permits the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to use up to 25 percent of the funds appropriated for local or regional purchase of food to assist people threatened by a food security crisis.

Mr. Chairman, if it were not for grants such as the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program many foreigners would have no other choice than to leave their native country in pursuit of a better life. In my very own office, I have a future international human rights lawyer by the name of Onyinyechi Abigail Nwaohuocha, who recently traveled to Cambodia and witnessed firsthand the devastation caused by food shortage and underdeveloped agricultural programs.

Mr. Chairman, H.R. 3161 reminds us that it is important for the United States to foster a relationship with other parts of the world, so

that citizens of developing countries can also have basic rights such as sufficient amounts of food. The McGovern-Dole International Food program is funded in this bill in the amount of \$100,000,000, an increase of \$1,000,000 above the amount available for fiscal year 2007, and the same as the budget request.

The George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program fights child hunger and poverty by supporting school feeding operations, which provide nutritious meals to children in schools. This simple formula has been proven to be a success. Because of such programs, students are better able to concentrate and learn more quickly on a full stomach. Enrollment and attendance rates have skyrocketed as a result of school feeding programs, particularly among girls who are too often denied an education.

Mr. Chairman, there are 110 million school-aged children suffering from hunger every day, and they are counting on America's leadership and generosity to provide them with an opportunity to break the cycle of poverty. This bill provides that leadership and generosity and it is for this reason that I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for its passage by an overwhelming margin.

ADDRESSES OF SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NANCY PELOSI AND SPEAKER OF KNESSET AND ACTING PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL DALIA ITZIK AT U.S.-ISRAEL FRIENDSHIP EVENT IN JERUSALEM

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, earlier this year in Jerusalem in the Israeli Knesset, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, was honored at one of the most moving and significant ceremonies that I have witnessed as a Member of the United States Congress.

The distinguished Speaker of the House, our colleague NANCY PELOSI of California, and the congressional delegation with her as well as other Members of Congress were guests at a state dinner held in the Chagall State Hall of the Knesset in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel. I was honored to join five of our colleagues in the bipartisan delegation that accompanied our Speaker on this very special occasion.

The hall, as you know, Madam Speaker, is dominated by the magnificent tapestry designed by Jewish artist Marc Chagall. It is hard not to be touched emotionally to see in Chagall's tapestry the symbols of Jewish identity and Israeli statehood—Moses holding the tablets of the Ten Commandments, David wearing his crown and dancing as he plays the harp, the seven-branched candelabrum which was the symbol of the Temple of Solomon and today is the symbol of the modern State of Israel.

On this very special occasion Speaker PELOSI was welcomed to Israel by the Speaker of the Knesset Dalia Itzik, who at the time was also the Acting President of Israel. Following her warm and friendly welcoming remarks, Speaker PELOSI gave a moving state-

ment on the strong and enduring ties that have linked the United States of America and the State of Israel since the day Israel was founded in 1948.

Madam Speaker, I ask that the welcoming address of Speaker Itzik and the outstanding address in response of Speaker PELOSI be placed in the RECORD, and I strongly urge my colleagues in the Congress to give these statements the thoughtful attention they deserve as important documents on the warm friendship between our two nations.

ADDRESS OF SPEAKER OF KNESSET AND ACTING PRESIDENT OF ISRAEL DALIA ITZIK

Madam Speaker of the House of Representatives of the United States, Ms. Nancy Pelosi; Members of the Delegation from the House of Representatives, Welcome to our House.

Madam Speaker, More than two hundred years have passed, and the impossible has now become possible. The United States House of Representatives elected a woman Speaker. It is true that there have been precedents in American democracy where women have held very high positions, but this is the first time that the House of Representatives has elected a woman to serve as Speaker. And it was you who achieved this high honor. (It took you over 230 years; it took us 58 years.)

Ms. Pelosi and members of the distinguished delegation, in less than 24 hours, tomorrow evening, the Jewish People will be enveloped in the sanctity of the Passover Festival. Millions of Jews—in Washington and in Jerusalem, in Tashkent and in Buenos Aires, in Sydney and in Budapest—will sit down together at their family Seder table. The Passover Festival is for us Jews our first and most ancient festival in our history, we have been remembering and celebrating this festival for some three thousand two hundred years. It was then that we became a nation. We went out from slavery to freedom. This was a formative event in our lives.

Another name for the Festival of Passover is the Festival of Freedom. Freedom and liberty form the chain that links us, the invisible chain that crosses continents and oceans from Jerusalem to Washington and back.

Madam Speaker, after two hundred and thirty years of independence, liberty is for you a dream that has already been realized. For us, after thousands of years, the dream is still being realized. We are an ancient People, whose roots are in the Bible and whose values are those of the Biblical prophets, while you are, so to speak, a relatively young nation and country. But we share the dream of liberty that ties us together with bonds of love.

We Israelis love the United States of America, not only because of your economic, military and political support and help. We love you because of that shared dream of liberty and the desire for peace. The Bible tells us "Seek peace and pursue it" (Psalms 34, 15), and you are our loyal partners in that unceasing search that has not yet ended.

Madam Speaker, the Members of the Knesset have just begun their Spring Recess. Nevertheless, many of them are here with us. Because of the Recess, we shall not be able to present to you, during your current visit, a day of normal parliamentary routine.

The Knesset is the location where decisions concerning the nation are taken. The Knesset reflects the unique nature of Israeli society in all its diversity. This is a society where Jews, Arabs, Druze and Circassians, veteran Israelis and new immigrants all live together. There are serious disputes between us.

There are disputes, and—although it may be difficult to believe—also points of agreement! And all this happens with complete